

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN NIAC IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE WASHDC NIAC IMMEDIATE 8708

S E C R E T THE HAGUE 4268

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM CHARGE'

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PLOS GR TU

SUBJ: TURKISH SEISMIC VESSEL

REF: STATE 190362 THE HAGUE 4152

1. ACTING POLITICAL DIRECTOR OF MFA, DE HOOP SCHEFFER, CALLED IN CHARGE THIS EVENING TO REQUEST EMBASSY URGENTLY TO TRANSMIT FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DER STOEL'S RESPONSE TO SECRETARY'S MESSAGE OF JULY 31 CONCERNING GREEK-TURKISH DIFFERENCES OVER ACTIVITIES OF TURKISH RESEARCH VESSEL SISMİK.

2. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DER STOEL'S MESSAGE:

QUOTE: THANK YOU FOR YOUR MESSAGE OF JULY 31 CONCERNING THE GREEK-TURKISH DIFFERENCES OVER THE SAILING OF THE RESEARCH VESSEL SISMİK.

ON FRIDAY AUGUST 6 I STARTED A VISIT TO GREECE TO DISCUSS THE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE ACCESSION OF GREECE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. DURING MY TALKS WITH KARAMANLIS AND BITSIOS I APPEALED TO THEM TO CONTINUE TO SHOW MODERATION IN THE SISMİK AFFAIRE. KARAMANLIS ANSWERED THAT THE TURKISH PROVOCATIONS MIGHT BECOME EVEN MORE DANGEROUS, UNLESS THE US AND THE EC-9 WOULD USE THEIR INFLUENCE IN ANKARA. STRONG

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PRESSURE ON THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO PREVENT

A WORSENING OF THE SITUATION.

IN THE EVENING OF FRIDAY AUGUST 6 THE SISMİK HAS APPARENTLY ENTERED THE WATERS ABOVE A PART OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF WHICH ATHENS CONSIDERS TO BE GREEK. ALSO SEISMIC EXPLORATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE IN A MANNER WHICH GREECE CONSIDERS TO BE AFFECTING GREEK SOVEREIGN RIGHTS. AFTER 2 HOURS, THE SISMİK WITHDREW FROM THAT AREA INTO INTERNATIONAL WATERS NOT CONTESTED BY GREECE. APPARENTLY GREEK NAVAL UNITS SHADOWING THE SISMİK REMAINED PASSIVE.

FROM MY CONVERSATIONS WITH KARAMANLIS AND BITSIOS I DREW THE CONCLUSION THAT THE GREEK MINISTERS ARE PARTICULARLY AFRAID THAT THE SISMİK WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE SIMILAR SEISMIC EXPLORATIONS IN THE DAYS TO COME. BOTH CONSIDERING PUBLIC OPINION IN GREECE AND THE NEED TO PROTECT GREEK JURIDICAL RIGHTS THEY FIND IT MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT TO AVOID ANY COUNTERACTION, I HAVE URGED THEM TO AVOID ANY MILITARY ACTION EVEN IF TURKEY WOULD RESORT TO NEW ACTS CONSIDERED AS PROVOCATIVE BY GREECE. IN THIS CONNECTION I HAVE ALSO REFERRED TO THE POSSIBILITY OF APPEALING TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL. DURING THE CONVERSATIONS I WILL HAVE IN ATHENS ON MONDAY AUGUST 9 I WILL CONTINUE TO POINT OUT THAT RESTRAINT IS ESSENTIAL. AT THE SAME TIME, I HAVE ASKED THE OTHER GOVERNMENTS OF THE EC-9 TO AGREE TO AN URGENT DEMARCHE IN ANKARA APPEALING TO THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT TO ABSTAIN FROM ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT FURTHER AGGRAVATE THE SITUATION. IN MY VIEW IT WOULD BE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE IF THE US WOULD TAKE A SIMILAR STEP IN ANKARA.

I LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR COMING VISIT TO THE HAGUE. UNQUOTE

3. DE HOOP SCHEFFER EXPLAINED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER HAD HOUR AND ONE-HALF CONVERSATION AFTERNOON OF AUGUST 6 WITH GREEK PM KARAMANLIS AND FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS. HE HAD FOUND THEM GREATLY CONCERNED AND HIGHLY CRITICAL OF ASSERTED TURKISH UNWILLINGNESS TO COME TO ANY KIND OF UNDERSTANDING. AT DINNER WITH SAME GREEK MINISTERS LATER VAN DER STOEL WAS PRESENT WHEN NEWS PROVIDED TO KARAMANLIS THAT TURKISH SHIP HAD ALREADY ENTERED INTO DISPUTED CONTINENTAL SHELF AREA, STAYED THERE ABOUT TWO HOURS AND THEN SAILED OFF. THIS EVENT VISIBLY INCREASED ATMOSPHERE OF HIGH TENSION HE HAD ALREADY OBSERVED. KARAMANLIS TOLD HIM GREEKS COULD NOT
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PERMIT SITUATION TO DEVELOP AS IT HAD BEEN DOING, REPEATED GREEK POSITION RESTED ON SOUND JURIDICAL PRINCIPLES AND EMPHASIZED THAT IF TURKS PERSISTED IN PROVOCATIVE ACTION GREECE WOULD HAVE TO CONSIDER TAKING "ACTION". DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTER HAD STRONGLY URGED RESTRAINT AND MODERATION, ORIGINAL WEEKEND PLAN HAD BEEN FOR VAN DER STOEL TO GO SAILING WITH KARAMANLIS, BUT CRUISE HAD BEEN CANCELLED AFTER NEWS OF INTRUSION OF TURKISH SHIP REACHED KARAMANLIS, FURTHER EVIDENCE, IN DUTCH

VIEWN OF EXTREME TENSION AND DEEP CONCERN OF GOG AT PRESENT SITUATION.

4. DUTCH MFA HAS JUST SENT URGENT CABLE TO EC-9 DESCRIBING VAN DER STOEL'S CONVERSATIONS IN ATHENS AND REQUESTING EC-9, IN THE LIGHT OF DANGEROUSLY INCREASING TENSION, FOR AGREEMENT FOR DUTCH AMBASSADOR IN ANKARA AS REPRESENTATIVE OF EC-PRESIDENCY TO MAKE DEMARCHE TO TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER URGING THE NEED FOR RESTRAINT AND FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE MATTER. DUTCH HOPE TO BE ABLE TO INFORM US EARLY AUGUST 9 OF RESULTS THESE EC-9 CONSULTATIONS.

5. DE HOOP SCHEFFER SAID FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSED HOPE US WOULD ALSO MAKE DEMARCHE IN ANKARA. CHARGE' EXPLAINED AMBASSADOR MACCOMBER HAD ALREADY DISCUSSED SITUATION WITH GOT, STRONGLY URGING MODERATION.

6. DE HOOP SCHEFFER IS JOINING FOREIGN MINISTER VAN DER STOEL IN ATHENS TOMORROW AND FURTHER DUTCH-GREEK CONVERSATIONS ARE SCHEDULED FOR MONDAY, AUGUST 9.

7. SUGGEST DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO REPEAT TO EMBASSIES IN ATHENS AND ANKARA.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, DISPUTES, SHIPS, SISMIK I R/V, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976THEHA04268
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG ALTERED
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760305-0408
From: THE HAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760875/aaaacnql.tel
Line Count: 139
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 76 STATE 190362
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 APR 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <18 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TURKISH SEISMIC VESSEL
TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, GR, TU, US, (STOEL, MAX VAN DER)
To: TEHRAN STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006